

Warwick Historic District Commission

Warwick City Hall
3275 Post Road
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 17, 2014 Warwick City Hall Planning Department

The following Commission members and staff were in attendance:

Ms. Donna Tobin, Chair
Ms. Ginny Leslie, Vice Chair
Mr. Maxwell Pounder
Mr. Barry O'Brien
Ms. Jennifer Siciliano

The following Commission members were absent:

Mr. William McQuade
Ms. Carol Pratt

The Following staff members were present:

Trish Reynolds, Warwick Planning Department

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson at 6:04 p.m.

Review of Petition #14-381-1-7 (Petition #09-381-1,2,3,5,6,7,8,72)

**Stone Wall alterations
Warwick Neck Avenue
The Cottages at Aldrich**

Commissioner Tobin introduced the Petition. The Applicant has requested that this Petition be postponed until the January 21, 2015 meeting.

Commissioner Siciliano made a motion to table the Petition.
Commissioner Leslie seconded. All voted in favor; none were opposed.

Petition #14-292-470

**Residential
14 North Fair Street
Pawtuxet Village**

The Petition was introduced. It was noted that the Petitioner was not yet present.

Commissioner Leslie made a motion to postpone the Petition until later in the meeting, or, if the Petitioner does not arrive, until the January 21, 2015 meeting.

Commissioner Siciliano seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed.

Petition #14-292-366
Aspray Boat House
Two East View Avenue

Commissioner Tobin introduced the Petition, which is to install a cupola and weathervane on the Aspray Boat House.

Dr. John Concannon, a member of the Gaspee Days Committee and its grants coordinator, was present to explain the project.

He explained to the Commission that several years ago, thanks to a grant from The Champlin Foundations, and with approval from the Commission, the committee installed PVC composite materials to prevent rot and repair the sills, eaves, and fascia of the boat house, retaining its appearance circa 1994, when it was reconstructed by the City of Warwick. He noted that while the boat house was located in the historic Pawtuxet Village zone, the building is not of significant interest outside of its present use as a community center.

Dr. Concannon explained that with the 50th Anniversary of the Gaspee Days Committee coming up this year, they felt it would be a good community service to improve the look of the boathouse with the addition of a cupola with a weathervane. The weathervane will be a schooner, which is the Gaspee Days' emblem, and will also serve as a reminder of the nautical heritage of Pawtuxet Village.

The proposal is to construct a 5' x 5' cupola, made of PVC resin materials that will withstand rot and sustain winds of up to 125 mph. The cupola will be in the center of the roofline and bolted to the roof to alleviate concerns about damaging the structural integrity of the building.

The committee wants a modest size cupola in order to avoid the appearance of a church steeple. The goal is a weathervane that would look attractive to the community center and possibly be useful to mariners.

The material for the weathervane has not yet been determined; Dr. Concannon explained there are concerns about theft if a material such as copper were used.

The project, including purchase of the cupola and weathervane and cost to hire a contractor, will be funded entirely from a \$5,250 grant secured from The Champlin Foundations. The committee hopes to have the work completed by May, when Gaspee Days begins. Dr. Concannon presented a letter of support from Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian and explained that the City owns the boat house but the committee

leases it for \$1/year and is responsible for upkeep of the building and carrying appropriate insurance.

Dr. Concannon explained that the cupola would be decorative, not functional, and feature louvers as opposed to glass.

A discussion took place regarding what an appropriate size and height would be for the cupola, given the sight line and the angle of the roof. Ms. Reynolds explained that the sketch she did for the grant application was not necessarily representative of the exact design and a formula is generally used to determine the basis of size.

Dr. Concannon and the Commission reviewed several sketches and photos in order to compare potential sizes, heights, and elevations. It was generally agreed that a square cupola of relatively simple design, perhaps with a curving or arch, would look best, given the construction of the boat house itself. Dr. Concannon noted that there was a danger in making the cupola too big, and equal concern if it was designed too small. Ms. Reynolds noted that the 5' x 5' proposal was determined to be an appropriate size for the elevation.

It was also noted that the committee had received Commission approval in May of 2003 for a 6' 6" cupola – an approval that has since lapsed – and it was generally agreed that size was too large. Ms. Reynolds noted that the original 2003 application was for an 8-foot structure and was subsequently modified by the Commission.

Commissioner Pounder suggested that Dr. Concannon construct a cardboard version to see how it looks proportionally and make adjustments from there. Dr. Concannon agreed to construct several different models with a 5' x 5' base and 6 1/2' height and will take photos from both Narragansett Parkway and from the other side of the cove.

Commissioner Leslie moved to continue the Petition until the January 21, 2015 meeting. Commissioner Pounder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously; none were opposed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Tobin asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the November 19, 2014 meeting. Ms. Reynolds noted there was an error in reference to "Knight Street," which should have read "North Street."

Commissioner Leslie asked about Petition #14-381-1-7. Ms. Reynolds replied that she had spoken with the Petitioner two days prior to sending out the agenda. Given the Christmas holiday and the need to provide adequate notification to neighbors, Ms. Reynolds suggested to the Petitioner that the matter be held until the January meeting.

A brief discussion also ensued relative to Petition #14-274-225. Ms. Reynolds said she had called the number listed on file several times and has been unable to leave a message with Ms. Hahn to follow up.

Commissioner Leslie made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2014 meeting. Commissioner Pounder seconded the motion. Commissioners Tobin, Leslie, and Pounder voted to approve the minutes; Commissioners Siciliano and O'Brien abstained as they were not present for the meeting. The motion passed, 3-0-2.

Ms. Reynolds informed the Commission that the Planning Department has applied for a \$10,000 grant through the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission in order to hire a historic architect or preservationist, through the bid/RFP process, to serve as a consultant to Commission members and Planning Department staff as they begin the review process of regulations and design standards.

A discussion took place relative to Petition #14-292-470. Ms. Reynolds said that, while she had not received a reply from an email she had sent to the Petitioner, she had included this petition on the agenda as a precaution, should the Petitioner have attended the meeting with the expectation that the request would be heard at this meeting. Ms. Reynolds said she will attempt to reach the Petitioners again.

Commissioner Leslie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pounder seconded. All voted in favor; none were opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.